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in which she saw "a wonderfully Blakean gift, but therewithal a startling recklessness of poetic ways and means." On reading William Watson's "Prince's Quest," she wrote to Dante Rossetti: "Marked beauties it has, and yet I don't foresee a great future for its author."

As religion determined (very beautifully) the content of most of her poetry, so it was also religion that determined (perhaps less happily) the course of her life. The mystery by which Christina Rossetti was able to reproduce in verse her moods of intense devotion is something one scarcely cares to invade with unanointed feet.

But as far as her own life is concerned it is scarcely possible to regard her uncompromising attitude toward religion as an unmixed blessing. In repeated small matters it seems to have involved unnecessary sacrifice on her part. More conspicuous is the fact that she did not marry James Collinson, her early lover, because he became a Catholic. And it was for some religious reason, obscure even to her always sympathetic brother, that she, much later on, refused marriage with Charles Bagot Cayley, whom she loved then and always, and to whom, according to William Rossetti, the "Monna Innominata" sonnets are "indubitably" written. But it seems fairly plain that this renunciation did not leave her even passively content, but that she thought longingly of the "common lot" to the end of her days.

OLIVIA HOWARD DUNBAR.

HENRIK IBSEN.*

THIS little book will prove exceedingly useful to the Ibsen student. For, although Mr. Moses has not succeeded in proving his right to be considered a creative critic, he has given us a careful and conscientious summary of all of importance that has been written about Ibsen in three or four languages. It is a compilation made with painstaking industry aided by intelligence. Impartially, with cautiously worded comments and much quoting from the original, Mr. Moses gives us the gist of the best-known writings on Ibsen, and tells also of some not so well known here, but of equal value. When we finish the book, we have an excel-

* "Henrik Ibsen: the Man and his Plays." By Montrose Moses. New York: Mitchell Kennerley.

lent perspective of the man and the dramatist as seen by his most gifted commentators and critics of various nations.

As a critic and a biographer, Mr. Moses has set himself the task of showing that the development of Henrik Ibsen was a thoroughly logical one, when studied in connection with the national influences which surrounded him throughout his life. This is the only true spirit in which to approach a study of Ibsen, but it is not always the spirit in which the critic goes to work. A certain grand isolation in which the figure of Henrik Ibsen seems to stand enveloped; the world-fame his work has gained for him, coupled with an almost total lack of knowledge of the more intimate mental and physical life of the country of his birth on the part of many Ibsen commentators; these facts have all contributed to a growing inclination to judge Ibsen as a unique and isolated genius, standing alone upon a mountain peak in a shadowy No Man's Land of the spirit. The chief critical merit of Mr. Moses's book is that he has emphasized Ibsen's constant mental and spiritual dependence on his own country; the fact that, in spite of years of residence abroad, Ibsen remained always the Norwegian, the provincial Norwegian even. His whole thought was for his country, her problems, her limitations, her possibilities. He was looking at a tiny corner of life, was painting on a little square of the world's great canvas, but the intensity of genius gave him an impetus that carried him out of himself into regions of which he had not dreamed.

Mr. Moses has painted lucidly the details of the life in which Ibsen's younger days were passed, and has endeavored, while describing the poet's development, to describe also, as much as is possible, the developments of Scandinavian political and mental life which were the exciting cause, and sometimes the result, of Ibsen's most notable work. He has fulfilled his task in an uninspired but conscientious fashion, and has held a just and true proportion of background as a setting for the principal figure of his book. In speaking of Ibsen's relations with Bjørnson, Mr. Moses contributes one phrase which is noteworthy. He says:

"It was not a thought of class distinction which was to come between the two at a later time, but the distinction was that which exists between the views of a constitutional radical and of an intellectual radical."

This characterization of Ibsen as an intellectual radical in contradistinction to the constitutional radical, or the "practical radi-

cal," to use a modern phrase, is the best bit of criticism in the book. It hits the heart of Ibsen's radicalism exactly.

After the first few chapters on Ibsen's early life, Mr. Moses divides his book into chapters on each play, giving the story, the incidents of its creation and completion, and all data of its reception in the dramatist's own country, as well as valuable information on performances and criticisms elsewhere. In this last respect, Mr. Moses's book is most complete, as he has been able to gather information regarding performances of Ibsen plays all over the world.

A little quotation from "Brand," the words of Agnes: "Think of me sitting still . . . who am debarred from the strife and catch no glimmer of the fire of action . . ." starts an interesting train of thought. Not one of the many Ibsen biographers has told us anything outside of the most meagre data concerning Ibsen's wife. There is, therefore, even in this well-tilled field, one little unexplored corner left for some future Ibsen commentator. There is no lifelong companion of any genius so utterly unknown as Ibsen's wife.

Some slight errors there are, even in this painstaking work. Mr. Moses mistakes *Rector* for *pastor* in commenting on Rosmersholm. A common error, as use of the title of Rector for Headmaster of a school, common in Scandinavia and Germany, is not general in English. Also, where does Mr. Moses get the idea that Hedda Gabler was "lowly bred," when the key-note of Hedda's character is the struggle between her own nature and the traditions of her bringing up as the daughter of a Norwegian general, a man of the highest social position?

In his chapters, explanatory and critical, on the separate plays, Mr. Moses uses the recently completed Scribner edition, in Mr. Archer's translation, as a basis. It is no small merit for a publisher to have presented in the English tongue that moderate-priced edition of Ibsen's work in an authoritative and carefully edited translation. Ibsen has long been a familiar figure in the English-reading literary world, but it was only by an isolated play now and then, or by comments of critics able to read foreign tongues, that this English-reading world could judge of the much-discussed poet. Now it is possible to make a comprehensive study of Ibsen in our own language.

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.